

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 /041 W

----- 076804

R 290807Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8925

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 0538

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB MY

SUBJ: NEB WORK STOPPAGES ABATE

REF: A. KL 0476

B. KL 0465

1. LOCAL PRESS JAN 28 AND 29 REPORTS FEWER ELECTRICAL OUTAGES ALTHOUGH NATIONAL ELECTRICITY BOARD (NEB) WORKERS' PROTESTS CONTINUE IN SOME AREAS. ELEVEN NEB WORKERS ARRESTED ON CHARGES OF ILLEGAL INDUSTRIAL ACTION (REF A) ARRAIGNED JAN 27 FOR VIOLATION OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT; HOWEVER, ARRESTED WORKERS DENIED BAIL BY MAGISTRATE'S COURT BECAUSE THEY ARE "STILL THREAT TO PUBLIC INTEREST." IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT, JUSTICE HARUN HASHIM, CHAIRMAN OF COMMISSION ON SALARIES AND WORK CONDITIONS FOR STATUTORY BODY EMPLOYEES (REF B), SAID JAN 27 THAT "SOME MISUNDERSTANDING" ON PART OF NEB EMPLOYEES WAS GENERATED BY A "TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR" IN REPORT MISCLASSIFYING CERTAIN WORKERS ENTITLED TO HIGHER WAGES BECAUSE OF SENIORITY. ALSO, ON JAN 28 NEB GENERAL MANAGER ISSUED ULTIMATUM TO STRIKING EMPLOYEES TO RETURN TO WORK OR FACE DISMISSAL.

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF JAN 28, NEB CHAIRMAN TAN SRI

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ABDUL KADIR SHAMSUDDIN (WHO IS ALSO CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVT,

THE NATION'S TOP CIVIL SERVANT) SAID THAT TERMS OF HARUN REPORT ARE NON-NEGOTIABLE AND THAT TO DEAL WITH NEB WORKERS' COMPLAINTS WOULD OPEN UP GOVT SALARY SYSTEMS TO ENDLESS DEBATE. HOWEVER, GOM WILL SHORTLY CREATE COMMISSION TO IRON OUT INCONSISTENCIES AMONG SALARY SCHEMES, I.E., HARUN SCHEME FOR STATUTORY BODIES, SUFFIAN SCHEME FOR CIVIL SERVANTS AND AZIZ SCHEME FOR TEACHERS. KADIR SHAMSUDDIN ALSO SAID THAT SEVERAL ARRESTED WORKERS WERE EX-LEADERS OF NEB UNION WHO WERE PROVOKING DISRUPTIONS FOR "POLITICAL REASONS" AND TO REGAIN CONTROL OF UNION.

3. COMMENT: END TO NEB WORKERS' PROTESTS APPEARS TO BE IN SIGHT, NOT IN THE LEAST BECAUSE OF GOM'S STERN ATTITUDE IN DEALING WITH WORKERS' GRIEVANCES.
UNDERHILL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR STRIKES, ARRESTS, TRIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellE0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975KUALA00538
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750032-0805
From: KUALA LUMPUR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750111/aaaaajix.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 KL 0476
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellE0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <18 NOV 2003 by RowellE0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEB WORK STOPPAGES ABATE
TAGS: ELAB, MY, NEB
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006